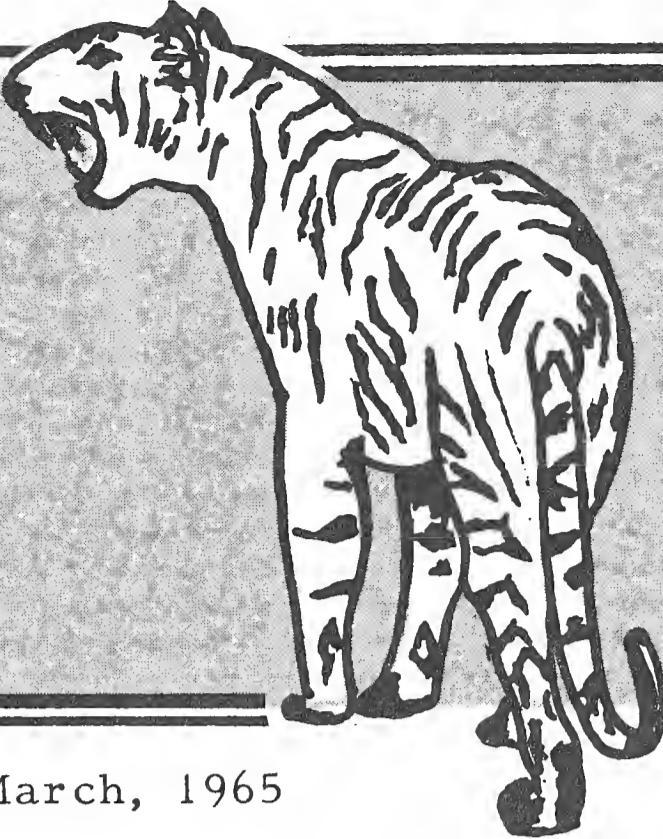


# SPOTS & STRIPES

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Vol. 2, No. 1

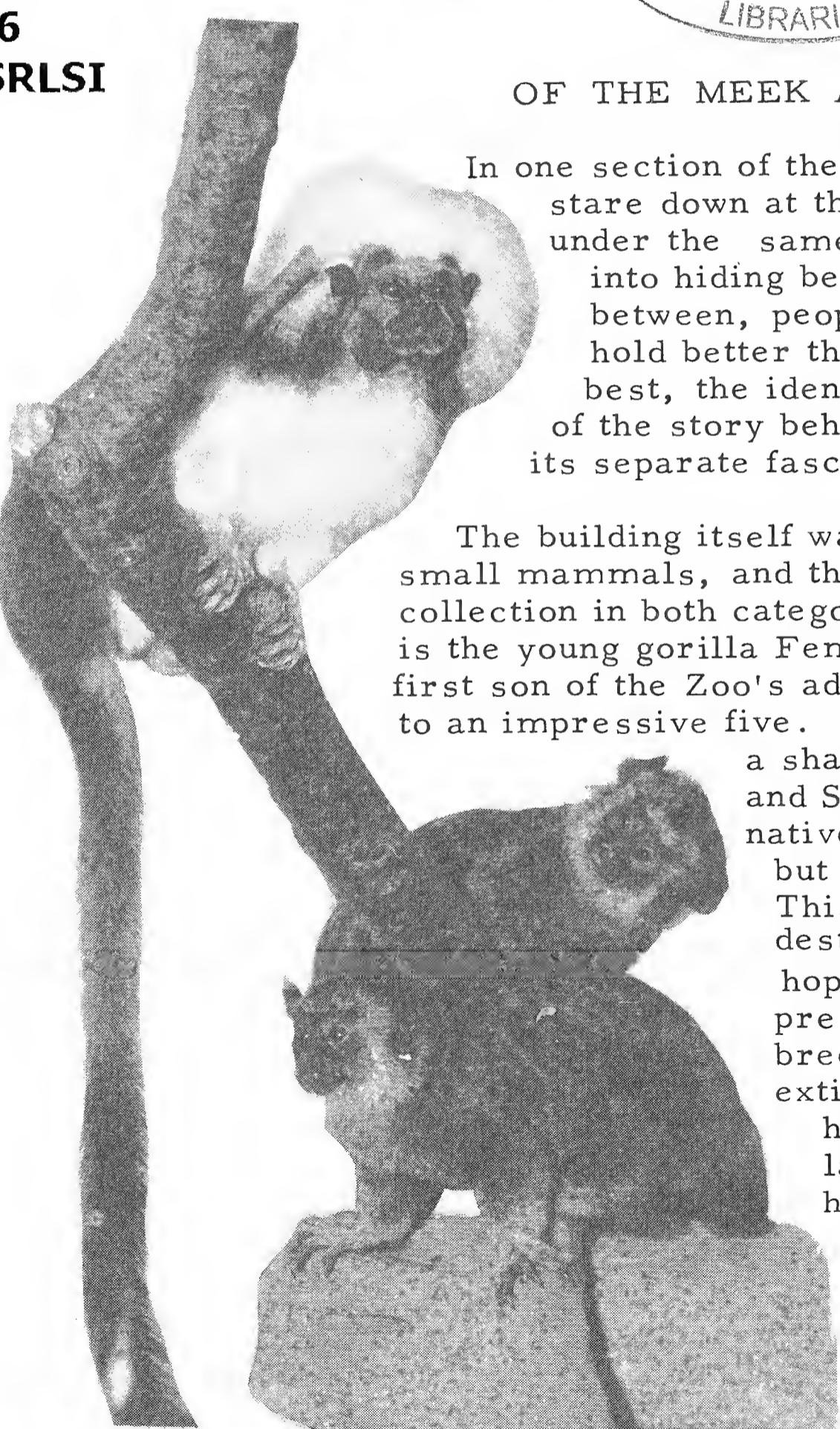


March, 1965

## OF THE MEEK AND THE MIGHTY

In one section of the small-mammal house the great apes stare down at the marveling faces of visitors. Elsewhere under the same roof the tiny short-tailed shrew squirms into hiding beneath its water dish. Along corridors between, people throng past more than 100 cages which hold better than twice that number of mammals. At very best, the identifying signs can tell only a small portion of the story behind each, for each individual animal has its separate fascinating life history, its special personality.

The building itself was designed for larger apes as well as for small mammals, and the National Zoological Park has a spectacular collection in both categories. Newest addition, an important one, is the young gorilla Femelle, 1965's surprise Valentine for Tomoka, first son of the Zoo's adult gorillas. She raises the gorilla count to an impressive five. Down the line from Femelle and Tomoka, a shaggy red trio of orangutans, Butch, Jenny and Suzie, are also zoo prizes. Orangutans are native to tropical lowlands of Borneo and Sumatra, but have become disturbingly scarce in the wild. This is largely because of constant habitat destruction over the past century. Today hopes are slim of effective protection, and preservationists now look to zoos as potential breeding grounds to help save the species from extinction. Our Zoo staffers eye Butch and his harem with high hopes of offspring and, more lately, have taken action with doses of hormones. The trio, however, usually spend their time devising new forms of mischief. Orangutans have the brainpower for plenty of schemes. They are traditionally placed somewhere between the chimpanzee



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and the gorilla on the large-ape intelligence scale. Keepers need no reminding. The long red face may be placid and mournful, but the aim is sure and the long arm deliberate when Butch or Jenny or Suzie decides to pick up an object and hurl it.

The large apes, spectacular as they may be, fail to steal the show from the lively and varied characters around the corner and down the halls. Elephant kin and anteaters, small gaudy monkeys and soft-eyed duikers, civets and squirrels and coatimundis add to a collection that Uncle Remus might consider just about "all de creeturs on dis earf." Some, less showy than others are too often by-passed. What is a hyrax, for example, aside from a plumpish rabbit-sized mule-eared individual with a furry drab coat? Plenty. The rock hyrax, common in Africa, is the coney of the Bible as well as the elephant's first cousin. Millions of years ago when reptiles still dominated the world and primitive mammals were in their formative stages, a common ancestor of both hyrax and elephant waddled through marshlands. Various branches of mammals evolved from this early form. Most vanished. The durable lineage of the elephant clung to life, however, but so did the alert and gregarious -- if lowly -- hyrax. Zoologists have demonstrated a striking similarity in bone structure between the two creatures.

Survival in the wild is one matter, but maintaining healthy and happy animals in zoos often presents challenges. The National Zoological Park has a way of succeeding with difficult charges where other zoos fail. That sleepy aardvaark is a good example. There are zoo-goers who vow that in years of patient viewing they have never seen more than the twitching of an ear or a placid blink from this sound sleeper. It is as if this ungainly, big-eared, humpbacked creature made haste to reserve itself a page one listing in the dictionary and then retired from all further exertion. He does stir, however, usually just before his three o'clock feeding. The aardvaark, a native of Africa with a powerful claw for digging deep in the earth, is notoriously difficult to keep alive in captivity, yet the old-timer in our Zoo has been lounging around there for more than 15 years, a world record for longevity.

Giant anteaters, South American, are also challenging to zoos. The Cincinnati Zoo kept one for an unprecedented nineteen years, 5 months and a day. Ours, however, will break that record in mid-November. It arrived in June, 1946.

Around the corner from the aardvaark, the two honey-beige fennec foxes bewitch their public. Forever snuggled together like two soft cushions you'd like to toss on the sofa, four brilliant eyes peer from behind a fringe of dried palm fronds that suggest the fennec's wild desert habitat. Their personalities are a bit thornier than their silky-soft mien suggests. As lips wrinkle back in defiant little twin snarls, it is not hard to picture them peering above their desert burrows in the Sahara sands, black eyes blazing, huge ears listening, ready to challenge all comers.

Far more sociable to their handlers are the representatives of the New World monkey (and near-monkey) set, such as the fragile-seeming marmosets, the tamarins with their startling faces, the agile squirrel monkeys and the red uakaris. Uakaris, incidentally, are the only New World monkeys with short tails and are more intelligent than the other primates of this hemisphere. The Zoo has a pair of them, one a new addition. They're worth close observation,

these small South American oddities that stay high on their lofty perches and manage to resemble tiny orangutans.

Thirty-nine cages at one end of the building comprise "night club row" in the small-mammal house. They house nocturnal mammals, a few of which have been assigned to an --er-- red-light district. Red night lights burn all day, keeping them active, while an automatic switch turns on bright lights at night, sending the animals into shadowy corners to sleep. The slow loris, a Malaysian relative of the monkey which in the wild relies upon slow stealth and darkness to capture prey, has such a cage. Visitors stopping long enough to study this slow moving, strange creature are well-rewarded. Occasionally it will cover its eyes with its forepaws. Folklore claims this is because the slow loris is continually seeing ghosts. Farther along the night line the African bushbaby peers with large round eyes at the "red darkness" around it. Members of this genus are quaint little animals with elongated foxlike faces, woolly fur and long bushy tails. They are rarely seen in the wild, being active only at night high in the protective foliage of trees, but their mournful cries are familiar sounds in the African darkness.

Throughout the building, feeding schedules and diets cover a wide range. Trays come and go. There are jars of baby food for a fussy tamandua, filet of fish for the martens. Hard-boiled eggs along with ground meat help keep the protein level high for the anteaters. Some animals gobble their meals in a gulp or two. Others, daintier, prefer to make it last. The little eastern mole, loathe to present himself above ground, snorkels rapidly upward through the soil, guided with unerring accuracy toward the newly filled food dish above. An eager, elongated snout probes beneath the dish and around it, as if bent on overturning the receptacle. Surface he must, however, and it is quickly done. Dinner of fresh mouse and dining mole vanish underground once more, snorkeling down.

Head keeper of the small-mammal house, Gene Maliniak, cannot recall an uneventful day in all his many years among his varied charges. Certainly, keeper Bernard Gallagher, whose special charges are the prized great apes, has no two days alike. To them and the other keepers falls the task of imposing efficient order and organization upon some 200 odd individuals, each bent upon upsetting routine. It's hard work, but they have set high standards and maintain them.

(J. A.)

#### VIEW FROM THE TOWER

Perhaps I'm easily impressed, but it isn't every day I get to look down on a pacing tiger not much more than five feet below me. If that pacing tiger (Samson) chose to go up his hind legs, and if there were no bars on the top of his 7 1/2-foot cage, I would no longer be looking down on him, but up. And probably, in.

My vantage point is a little window overlooking the interior of the lion house -- the tower office of Billie Hamlet, ex-officio den mother for the big cats. Her little nook in the 73-year-old building -- oldest house in the Zoo in continuous use for the exhibition of animals (at one time with gorillas,

alligators and pythons, as well as the then-current crop of felines) -- has not always been the quiet place of contemplation it is today. Once it was HQ for the Zoo police, who scattered threatening signs throughout the Park: All lost children will be taken to the Lion House.

Even today it is not without its moments of truth. Into the soft sounds of twittering wrens and cooing pigeons at the birdfeeder, suddenly Samson, as only a full-grown tiger can, "coughs". Just as suddenly and quite unbeknownst to my conscious mind there is a clear half-inch of space between me and my chair, and I have to re-do the page I was writing. Or, take 4.30 in the afternoon, when the big cats start to talk. The very walls vibrate, roars are amplified by the telephone in one's hand, and startled people on the other end of the line are apt to say : "Where did you say you were?"

It is the knowledge of the subdued strength behind that "cough" and the realization that if a few ifs were only slightly more iffy that make the awesome power of the pacing cats below take on a new significance. And, suddenly, I am made more aware than ever of what those other signs around the Zoo really mean when they say: "Wild Animals ARE Dangerous."

(J. McC.)

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Letter to the Editor

Vol. 1, No. 4, of Spots and Blotches has filtered down to the ranks and I beg to comment, with some vehemence, upon a remark attributed to me by name on page 3. I have NEVER EVER uttered, ever in my life, any expression like "Holy Smoke," with or without the exclamation point. In my youth I was given to such expressions as "Jinkies!" "Leapin' Lizard, Sandy" (when Sandy was around) and "Cryminentlies" but never "Holy Smoke," NOT EVER! In all probability I said something like "Hmff, the etc." or "Saints preserve us, the etc." or something unprintable I picked up on Parkview Ave.

Naturally, I expect a retraction, or correction, to appear in your next issue, along with the news that the culprit has been dismissed, whoever she is (I wonder who). --- J. Anthony Davis, N. Y. Zoological Park

(It was Mr. Davis who christened the new great flight cage "The Kookaburra Hilton." - Ed.)

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"Say, did you know that a club called Friends of the Zoo has a publication called 'Spots and Stripes?' (Or is it 'Stripes and Spots'? Anyway, whatever it is, they can't change it.) --- Don Maclean, Washington Daily News, February 9, 1965.

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LONG-TERM RESIDENTS AT THE NZP

58 1/2 years .....	Siberian Crane
36 years .....	Galapagos Tortoise
34 years .....	Spiny Softshell ( <i>Trionyx ferox</i> )
32 years .....	African Crocodile Salt-water Crocodile
31 years .....	Broad-nosed Crocodile
29 years .....	Hybrid Bears
27 years .....	Chinese Alligator
26 years .....	American Crocodile
25 years .....	Toque, or Bonnet Macaque
24 years .....	Pygmy Hippopotamus Narrow-nosed Crocodile
23 years .....	Red-faced Macaque
20 years .....	Roloway Monkey Patagonian Sea-lion Mountain Viscacha Rhea
19 years .....	Giant Anteater
15 years .....	Echidna Aardvark
12 years .....	Wombats
9 years .....	Cuban Toad

MORE RECENT ARRIVAL

The National Zoological Park has a natural propensity, it seems, for acquiring tall, handsome, charming, highly qualified, world-traveled men. Latest member of the Zoo team rating 100 per cent on all these qualifications is Special Assistant to the Director Donald R. Dietlein.

A native Californian with zoology degrees from U. C. L. A. and the University of London, Don has spent a total of 15 years traveling and living in Alaska, Spain, England, Africa, and the Orient, and a considerable portion of this time as a U. S. Navy ensign. (I asked him once where in the world he hasn't been; he thought for a while and then brightened up with "India, I've never been to India." )

As a medical entomologist for the Navy, in connection with population shifts in the Aswan Dam area, Don lived among and worked with the Sudanese (White Nile) tribes of Dinka and Shiluk, searching for and finally isolating the sand fly vector of a disease called Kala-Azar, a leishmaniasis.

Don also chalks up two expeditions to his credit -- the first to British Guiana for the University of London, studying animal life in tropical rain forests, and the second to the Galapagos Islands as a parasitologist. For this trip he was borrowed from the Navy by the University of California for the Galapagos International Science Project that covered fifty disciplines.

Although an invertebrate man by training, Don's totally a zoo-man by inclination and he's had some good experience raising such critters as servals, toucans, tortoises, ostriches, monkeys and gazelles. All of this, coupled with administrative and military know-how adds up to an open-and-shut case of how'd we ever survive without him? -- everybody's Uncle Donald!

(M. McC.)

SHE'S YOUNG! SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! SHE'S ENGAGED!

In the old days marriages were usually arranged between two sets of parents and once accomplished, the parents sat back and waited for the best to happen. So it often is in well-organized zoos. In some instances the negotiations for an animal marriage are complex but nevertheless worth the effort expended, as reproduction in captivity is indicative of animal well-being.

Our female gorilla illustrates the point and has presented us with two bouncing boys, but in order to continue a long line of gorilla births the two boys should grow up with a couple of nice gorilla girls, eventually mate and add to our growing gorilla family.

To this end negotiations were instituted to find a nice girl gorilla as a future mate for Leonard, the younger of the two boys. We received a beautiful young lass from the Cameroons and after being checked out by Dr. Gray for parasites, etc., she was introduced to Leonard.

Leonard, who had never seen a gorilla from the time of his birth, was most apprehensive of this shaggy creature who was thrust into his cage. His apprehension quickly turned to fear as she advanced on him and his reaction to this new cage-mate was terrorized screams which increased in intensity and volume as she got closer. The female gorilla, named Femelle, was highly indignant at such a reaction to her charm and beauty and responded in a typically female way by biting him. Thus ended the hoped-for love match!

Older brother, Tomoka, thereby inherited little brother's golden opportunity and for two weeks Tomoka and Femelle were allowed to look at each other, reach out and touch each other and communicate from adjoining cages. Following the end of this two-week introduction period, Femelle was allowed in Tomoka's cage. She looked the situation over, glanced ever so casually at Tomoka, and proceeded to sit down and select all the goodies

from the pile of food, leaving only the kale for Tomoka. Tomoka eyed the proceedings like a perfect host, but a trained observer could see the slight rising of the hackles.

Femelle had a high old time feasting, climbing all over the bars, wandering the limits of the big cage and making herself obviously mistress of the home. Tomoka, meanwhile, stayed as far away from her as possible -- if she climbed up, he slid down; if she slid down he climbed up. If she headed for the right hand corner, he quickly hurried for the opposite corner. There was no question about it -- she was a happy little bride-to-be, but Tomoka didn't act as if he was too sure about sharing his home with her.

During the afternoon they had a couple of little tiffs which cleared the air completely and the following day they had settled down to what appears to be domestic amicability.

Barring serious disagreements, their engagement can be announced any day now!

(B.E.H.)

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In April, 1964, the Board of Governors of the Friends of the National Zoo passed a resolution designating the Society's primary purpose and function to be the encouragement of a broader zoological interest and knowledge and to develop an educational service which would utilize all effective contemporary media.

The President was authorized to establish an educational steering committee, not necessarily limited in membership to present members of the organization, which would formulate and recommend to the Board programs designed to achieve these ends.



The Educational Steering Committee is now set up as follows:

Mrs. L. Noble Robinson, Chairman  
Mrs. Ord Alexander  
Monroe Bush  
James Godard

Mrs. Louis Oberdorfer  
Mrs. Sanford Randall  
Mrs. John Steele  
Judge Russell Train

Miss Marion P. McCrane, Consultant from the Zoo

After consulting with Dr. Reed and the staff of the Zoo, it was decided that the primary need of the Zoo at this time is an information pamphlet which can be distributed by the Zoo in response to requests for information. Upon recommendation from the Education Committee, the Board of Governors decided to go ahead with this project. The pamphlet is now being planned and it is hoped that it will be ready for distribution later this spring.

The committee, again after consultation with the staff of the Zoo, then decided to look into the possibility of preparing "quiz sheets" for the use of school children visiting the Zoo.

Many zoos have these quiz sheets. They are printed sheets of paper with questions, and with space to write or draw in the answers, which can be found either by observation of the animals or by reading the signs. These sheets provide an added interest to a school tour and encourage the children to closer observation of the animals.

The sheets can be prepared on different levels of achievement (identification of pictures for kindergarten and first grade, simple questions for primary grades, harder scientific questions for high-school level). They can also be prepared for use in specific classes or programs (a class studying South America or Africa, for instance). They can also deal with classes of animals (birds, reptiles, mammals).

This program is obviously going to require a great deal of preliminary consultation with the schools of the area. We must first discover if the schools would find these sheets useful and if so, the levels and the subject matter they would find most useful. After that, if we decide to go ahead with the program, preparing the sheets will be a large task.

If any members of the Friends of the National Zoo would like to help in any part of this program, it would be much appreciated by the Committee. If you are interested, please call the chairman, Mrs. Robinson, EM 3-2285

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Contributors to this issue of SPOTS AND STRIPES: Jocelyn Arundel, Jean McConville, Marion McCrane, Billie Hamlet. Editor: Lucile Q. Mann

Cover picture: Male cottontop marmoset and his hybrid offspring (Saguinus midas X S. oedipus).

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